

Freedom for the PAZ Hernalts 6

On the 14th of September the deportation prison (PAZ) at Hernalser Gürtel in Vienna was burning. A cell was set on fire in resistance of imprisonment and the upcoming deportations. Instead of being deported, six people were transferred to the prison Justizanstalt Wien Josefstadt. State and media presented them as criminals to reinforce the racist deportation system.

Now, five months after the incident, the Hernalts 6 will face trial on 15 and 22 March in Vienna.

We have formed a solidarity campaign for those prisoners who wish to be supported by raising funds, keeping in touch and accompanying the trials.

Solidarity against the deportation regime is our focal point. However, we do not want to romanticize the people accused; from our perspective, it was an act of collective political resistance. But the repression that followed the protest causes isolation and individualisation, and we expect that court actors will focus on depoliticisation. The accused might react in different and contradicting strategies to defend themselves. For a solidarity group this is a difficult situation to deal with.

We are caught between our political analysis of resistance, and the diverse and contradicting self-understandings of the prisoners. We therefore risk being patronising by imposing our perspective on them. We say this openly, because we believe in solidarity that deals with the ambiguities in struggles of real people in their daily lives.

We hope that this kind of complex solidarity is longer-lasting and deeper than solidarity that is shaped by simple heroicisation or romanticisation.

People are isolated in deportation prisons all across Europe in order to break their will and force them to leave. However, people are fighting deportation all the time. Hungerstrikes, self-injury and suicides are happening every week in Austria; these are the last means of resistance often accompanied by desperation, hopelessness and trauma.

The Hernalts 6 are hit by persecution individually. In prison, there is no possibility to construct a collective answer and strategy. This division is the very aim of the legal system we live in. But only united, even in difference, we will fight the fascist and nationalist narrative of our present! This is why solidarity is our weapon and this is why we are here.

Court Dates: 15 & 22 March

Reflection & Discussion: 29 March
6 PM

Wolke Event Space
4th floor, room C4.26.9
Augasse 2-6
1090 Vienna

More information:

<https://freepazhernalts6.noblogs.org>

